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NEWTON LAKE

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STATE CONSERVATION AREA

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HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

Central Illinois Public Service Company (C.I.P.S.) is constructing an electric power generating plant in Jasper County southwest of Newton, Illinois. The Newton plant is the most modern in a network of C.I.P.S. generating plants. The plant is fueled by coal and uses a new type of sulfur dioxide removal system. It is hoped that this system will enable the plant to continue to burn high sulfur Illinois coal yet remain within environmental safety standards. One of two proposed generators is now functioning. When both generators are operational, there will be a total generating capacity of approximately 1,180,000 kilowatts. C.I.P.S. is now providing service to an estimated 760,000 people in 65 counties over a service area of 20,000 square miles.

RECREATION AREA

In 1979 the Illinois Department of Conservation signed a 25-year lease with Central Illinois Public Service Company which designates the 1,755-acre Newton Lake and 540 acres of shoreline as a day use conservation area. By agreement, recreational activities in the area consist of bank and boat fishing, picnicking, and horseback riding. C.I.P.S. financed the initial recreational development of the area.

BOATING

Boats can be launched from the two-lane ramp at the south access area. Concessions are available near the lake. There is a 10-horsepower limit on the lake. The northern ends of the Sandy Creek and Laws Creek fingers of the lake are restricted areas. Please observe buoy lines designating restricted areas. (Refer to brochure map) Sailboating and swimming are not permitted.

FISHING

Newton Lake has a good bass population, resulting primarily from a comprehensive stocking program initiated shortly after the lake was impounded in 1976. Pole and line fishing only is permitted with anglers limited to using two poles per fisherman.

To avoid the possibility of overharvest and thus assure a good fishery in the future, it was necessary to impose an 18 inch minimum length on largemouth bass with a daily creel limit of three per angler. The

lake may produce some of the largest trophy size bass in Illinois.

Anglers who catch legal size bass but do not desire to keep them are encouraged to return the fish to the lake. All sub-legal sized bass caught must be released immediately after catching. All bass to be released must be returned immediately after catching to have the maximum chance of survival. Bass are measured from the tip of the mouth when closed to the tip of the tail when compressed and while lying flat on top of a ruler.

The lake has a good population of walleye; some of which range up to nine pounds in weight. The species will not reproduce in the lake and must periodically be stocked to maintain the fishery. Fishermen are permitted to take six walleye, each at least 14 inches long, daily.

There are no size or creel limits on any other species present in the lake. For safety reasons, ice fishing is not allowed. There is no overnight boat docking.

HORSETRAILS

Twenty-two miles of horsetrail along the picturesque shoreline of the lake were opened in 1980. The horsetrail parking lot is at the north access area.

PICNICKING

Picnic facilities are available in both the north and south access areas. The picnic areas offer a scenic view of the lake. Large groups should contact the site staff in advance.

WILDLIFE

A trip to Newton Lake for the nature lover will be rewarding. White-tailed deer and many smaller varieties of wildlife can be found. Blue Heron can be seen in shallow coves and large numbers of ducks and geese remain on the lake during most of the winter.

PRAIRIE CHICKENS

The brochure cover brings attention to the Jasper County Prairie Chicken population near Newton Lake. Jasper County hosts the largest of three prairie chicken flocks still existing in Illinois. Large flocks were once a common sight in Illinois. The prairie



chicken has earned fame through the uniqueness of its mating ritual. Central Illinois Public Service Company has designated approximately 240 acres of its property as additional prairie chicken sanctuary.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .

Admittance will not be granted to groups of 25 or more persons to any state area unless permission from the area staff has been secured to use the facilities. It is also required that groups of minors have adequate supervision and at least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.

All state areas are open year round, closing only for Christmas Day and New Year's Day. When weather conditions necessitate the closing of park roads during freezing and thawing periods, access to park facilities is by foot only.

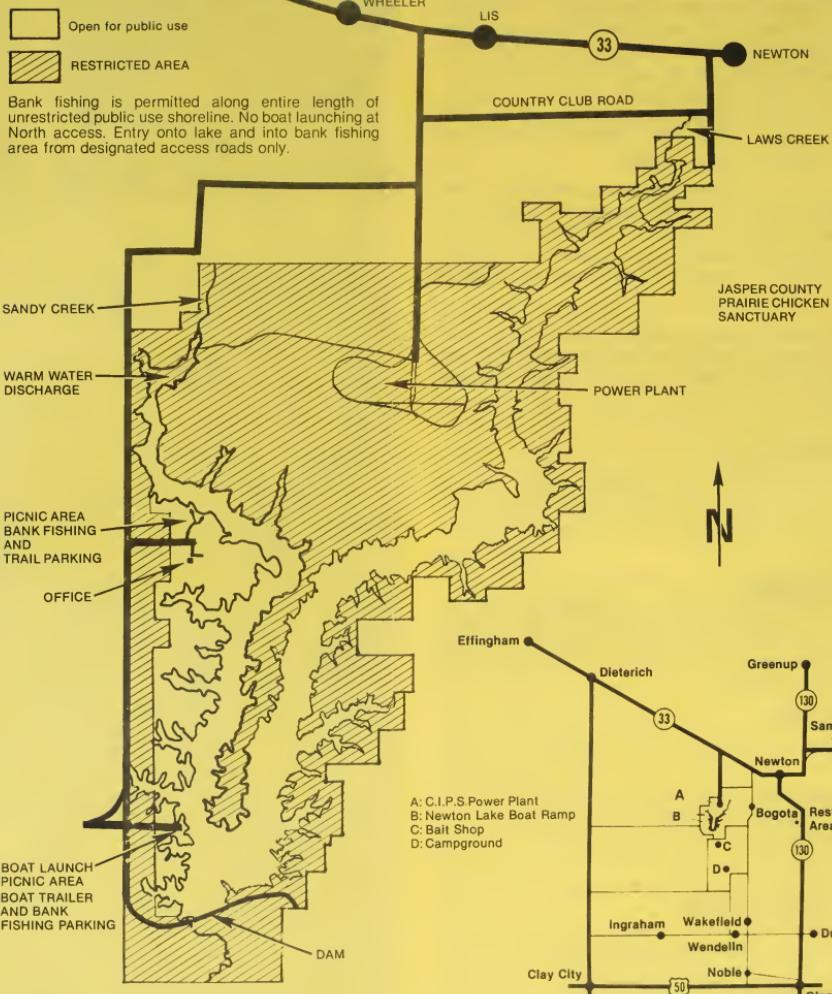
For more details, contact Site Superintendent, Newton Lake Conservation Area, R.R. #4, Newton, IL 62448, phone (618) 783-3478.

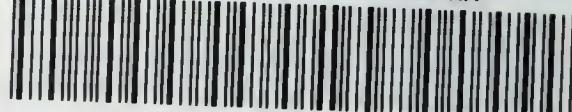
For information on other recreation areas, write Department of Conservation, Bureau of Land and Historic Sites, 605 Wm. G. Stratton Building, Springfield, Illinois 62706.

PLEASE: This area is for all to enjoy so please help keep it clean. All vehicles must remain on existing roadways and parking lots. No plants, flowers, shrubs, or trees may be removed or damaged. Fires are permitted only in campstoves located in the picnic areas. All pets must be on a leash which is a maximum of 10 feet.



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